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"The Results of Repentance"

Acts 3

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Repent! This is a word that many of us are familiar with but few of us understand how to apply to our lives. In this study, we will unpack four common questions about repentance: What is repentance? What happens to one who resists repentance? What leads us to repentance? What are the results of repentance? As we study Acts 3, we will learn more about a concept that can change where we spend eternity.

1. Context

- a. In **Acts 3**, Peter and John went to the temple for prayer.
- b. While there, they saw a man who was born lame.
- c. Then Peter said to the lame man, *"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk"* (**Acts 3:6**).
- d. When the lame man was healed, he walked, leaped, and praised God, drawing attention to Peter, who then pointed the crowd to Jesus.
 - i. **DISCUSS**: How can you draw attention to God this week? What are some ways you can point others to Him?

2. **Acts 3:11-26** – *"[11] Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed. [12] So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: 'Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? [13] The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. [14] But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, [15] and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. [16] And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. [17] Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers. [18] But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. [19] Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, [20] and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, [21] whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. [22] For Moses truly said to the fathers, "The LORD your God will raise*

up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. [23] And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.” [24] Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. [25] You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, “And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” [26] To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.”

- a. Barabbas was the murderer referred to in verse 14.
- b. Jesus is the prophet referred to in verse 23.

3. The importance of repentance

- a. The meaning of repentance
 - i. To “repent” means “to turn back.”
- b. The Biblical emphasis on repentance
 - i. In **Acts 3**, Peter made it clear that all of us need to repent.
 - ii. Jesus preached on repentance.
 - iii. John the Baptist preached on repentance.
 - iv. **DISCUSS**: Why do you think repentance is central to the Gospel message? What is the danger of omitting the need for repentance as some churches are doing?
- c. The eternal impact of repentance
 - i. Jesus affectionately called the church His bride.
 - ii. Jesus promised to return for His bride.
 - 1. **John 14:3** – “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”
 - iii. You must get repentance right because you will meet Jesus one day for one of two occasions:
 - 1. To rejoice with the Bridegroom when He returns.
 - 2. To face the Judge on judgment day.

4. Four questions

- a. What is repentance?
- b. What happens to one who resists repentance?
- c. What leads to repentance?
- d. What are the results of repentance?

5. What is repentance?

- a. What repentance is not

- i. It is not feeling sorry for getting caught.
 - ii. It is not feeling bad about doing bad things.
 - iii. It is not about doing good to make up for your sins.
 - 1. On judgment day, God will not weigh your good works against your sins on a scale.
 - 2. In comparison to a holy God, *“all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6).*
- b. What repentance is
 - i. The Greek word for “repentance” is **metanoia**.
 - 1. **Meta** means “to change.”
 - 2. **Noeó** means “the mind.”
 - 3. **Metanoia** means “to change the mind.”
 - ii. Repentance is about changing your mind on your condition.
 - 1. We need to realize we are not naturally good; we are born with a sinful condition.
 - 2. **Psalms 51:5** – *“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.”*
 - 3. **Romans 3:10** – *“There is none righteous, no, not one.”*
 - iii. Repentance is about changing your mind on your need for a Savior.
 - 1. When we realize our condition, then we can see that we need Jesus to save us.
 - 2. **DISCUSS**: How did God help you realize your sinful condition? How did that lead you to find the solution in Christ?
 - iv. Repentance is about changing your attitude toward sin.
 - 1. The word “repent” was a nautical term used to tell a sailor to turn the ship around.
 - 2. Sometimes going forward means turning around to go on the right path.
- c. Why repentance is necessary
 - i. **Romans 6:23a** – *“The wages of sin is death.”*
 - 1. The payment, or wages, earned by sin is spiritual death—eternal separation from God.
- d. The two sides of repentance
 - i. Turning from evil
 - 1. **Acts 3:26** – *“To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.”*
 - 2. The Greek word for “turning away” is **apostrephō**.
 - a. **Apo** means “separation” and **strephō** means “to turn.”
 - b. **Apostrephō** means “to turn from”
 - ii. Turning to God

1. **Acts 3:19a** – “Now repent of your sins and turn to God.” (NLT)
2. The Greek word used to describe turning to God is **epistrephó**.
 - a. **Epi** means “upon” or “to,” and **strephō** means “to turn.”
3. We can turn to Jesus, who died on the cross to make us right with Him.
- iii. Biblical repentance is about turning from unbelief to belief, from darkness to light, and from sin to the Savior.
 1. **DISCUSS**: What have you left behind for the sake of following Christ, and how have you found Christ to be superior to what the world has to offer (**Philippians 3:8**)?
6. What happens to one who resists repentance?
 - a. Not everyone wants to repent.
 - i. Some refuse to repent because they enjoy their sin.
 1. Sin is fun “for a season” but ends with death (**Hebrews 11:25**).
 - ii. Others refuse to repent because they want to be the master of their lives.
 1. **DISCUSS**: Do you have an undivided heart, or do various passions vie for control of your life? What does God want you to let go of so you may draw near to Him?
 - b. Those who refuse to repent will experience eternal separation from God in hell.
 - i. Hell was originally “for the devil and his angels,” not man (**Matthew 25:41**), but those who rebel against God join the Enemy’s side and will meet the same end.
 - ii. Hell is God’s eternal condemnation, wrath, and judgment against the unrepentant.
 1. **Luke 13:3** – “You will perish, too, unless you repent of your sins and turn to God.” (NLT)
 2. **Acts 17:30–31** – Jesus “[30] commands everyone everywhere to repent of their sins and turn to him. [31] For he has set a day for judging the world with justice by the man he has appointed, and he proved to everyone who this is by raising him from the dead.” (NLT)
 3. **Romans 2:5** – “Because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God’s wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.” (NIV)
7. What leads to repentance?
 - a. God’s heart

- i. God does not want us to perish, but to repent.
 1. **2 Peter 3:9** – *“The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”*
- ii. God loves us and desires to forgive us.
 1. **John 3:16** – *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*
 2. Anyone can repent.
 3. **DISCUSS**: How can you respond to doubts about whether God can forgive someone like you (**Titus 3:5**)?
- b. God’s kindness
 - i. **Romans 2:4** – *“Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?”* (NIV)
 1. God is more patient than any man, but His patience has a time limit: we must get right with the Lord in this life.
 - ii. **Hosea 11:4a** – God draws us *“with cords of kindness”* (ESV).
 - iii. **Psalms 103:10a** – God *“does not treat us as our sins deserve.”* (NIV)
- c. Godly sorrow
 - i. **2 Corinthians 7:10** – *“Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.”* (NIV)
 - ii. The difference between worldly sorrow and godly sorrow
 1. Worldly sorrow is upset about being caught and makes excuses for sin.
 2. Godly sorrow is not about beating ourselves up—Jesus was already beaten for us.
 3. Godly sorrow is about being broken over our sin.
 - iii. A Biblical example of godly sorrow
 1. David’s sin against Bathsheba and Uriah *“displeased the LORD”* (**2 Samuel 11:27**).
 2. The Hebrew word for *“displeased”* is **rā’ a’** meaning “to break or shatter.”
 3. Our sin breaks God’s heart.
 - a. Just as you would hate for a loved one to choose a self-destructive path, so God is heartbroken when we choose to sin against Him.
 - b. **DISCUSS**: Does your heart break over what breaks the heart of the Father? What sin needs to break your heart?
 4. God sent the prophet Nathan to confront David, who repented in response to the rebuke.
 5. David’s repentance is recorded in **Psalms 51**.

- a. **Psalm 51:16–17** – “[16] For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. [17] The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise.”
 - b. Brokenness over sin motivates us to turn away from sin.
 - iv. The prerequisite of humility
 - 1. Repentance requires humility because confession means we stop making excuses and agree with God that we have sinned.
 - v. Repentance is about wanting nothing more to do with sin.
 - 1. The decision to repent of sin and turn to God brings no regrets.

8. What are the results of repentance?

- a. Remission our sins
 - i. **Acts 3:19a** – “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.”
 - ii. The phrase “*blotted out*” speaks of the way God washes away our sins.
 - 1. In the first century, ink would not immediately bite into the paper, allowing a scribe time to blot out errors.
 - 2. Jesus gave His life to put our debt into His account, blotting out our sins.
 - iii. **2 Corinthians 5:21** – God “made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”
 - 1. When the Father sees us, He sees Jesus, the spotless Son of God.
- b. Refreshment from God’s presence
 - i. **Acts 3:19** – “Repent . . . so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”
 - 1. God does not promise us an emotional experience, but supernatural peace, joy, and freedom from the power of sin.
 - 2. As Christians, we will still wrestle with sin but our attitude toward sin will change.
 - 3. **DISCUSS:** What is one way God has refreshed you this week?
- c. The return of Jesus Christ
 - i. Peter offered the Israelites the opportunity to hasten the return of Jesus Christ.
 - 1. **Acts 3:20** – Repent “that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before.”
 - ii. The prophets spoke of Israel’s future national spiritual revival.
 - 1. **Matthew 23:37–39** – Jesus said, “[37] O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not

willing! [38] See! Your house is left to you desolate; [39] for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"

2. **Romans 11:25b–26a** – “[25] Blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. [26] And so all Israel will be saved.”
 - iii. God’s heart is not just for Israel, but also for the whole world.
 1. **2 Peter 3:9** – “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”
 2. God’s delay is to keep the window of opportunity open for more people to be saved.
 3. **DISCUSS:** Do you share God’s heart for the lost to come to repentance? How are you spreading His message?
 - d. The revival of a nation (**2 Chronicles 7:14**)
 - e. A relationship with Jesus
 - i. **Revelation 3:19–20** – “[19] Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. [20] Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.” (ESV)
 - f. Receiving the Spirit (**Acts 2:38**)
 - g. Rejoicing in heaven (**Luke 15:6–10**)
 - i. Jesus used two parables to explain that when one person repents, all of heaven rejoices.
 - h. Rescue from death
 - i. **Romans 6:23** – “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
 - ii. When you repent, God rescues you from spiritual death (**2 Corinthians 7:9–10**).
 1. The unsaved can repent unto salvation.
 - iii. Christians should also repent.
 1. Repentance is not a one-time event.
 2. **Matthew 3:8** – “Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.” (ESV)
 3. The Christian life is a daily abiding in God, a daily turning from sin and to God.
9. Love necessitates choice
- a. God is love.
 - i. Love is not just what God does, but who He is.
 - ii. Love does not violate free will, so it necessitates choice.

- b. Not everyone wants to repent.
 - i. Some refuse to repent because they love their sin more than God.
 - 1. **John 3:19** – *“This is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”*
 - ii. Satan loves to lie, telling us we are stuck in our sins and are too far gone. But as long as there is breath in our lungs, we can repent.
 - 1. **DISCUSS**: What lies did you believe that hindered you from coming to God? What verses helped counter the Enemy’s lies?

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James (NKJV)